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ANNUAL REPORT  
BENEFITS AND COUNSELING BRANCH  
BENEFITS AND SERVICES DIVISION  
OFFICE OF PERSONNEL

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ANNUAL REPORT

SECTION I

BENEFITS AND COUNSELING BRANCH

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS

Included in this report is a statistical summary which, when examined with the narrative comments, will reveal an increased workload and a continuation of the high level of activity attained by the Branch in other reporting periods.

At the outset, it should be noted that the number of manhours devoted to Branch programs cannot be measured by the simple statistical reporting of cases handled. Within each activity, cases will require a varying degree of time and effort. For example, some death cases require extensive after-hours activity, frequent contacts with the next of kin, liaison within the Agency and with other Federal agencies, and often with private attorneys; others may require little activity of this type. While some cases can be processed in a few weeks, others often require months of continual effort. The same is true with respect to overseas medical claims, counseling and other programs.

GENERAL COMMENTS

In November 1965, the Civil Service Retirement function and the three personnel working in this activity were transferred out of the Benefits and Counseling Branch to form the nucleus of the newly formed Retirement Branch/BSD. Also, in July 1965, a GS-12 Employee Benefits Officer position was abolished and the technician occupying the slot was transferred. This left the Benefits and Counseling Branch with

employees assigned to its staff, four less than a year

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The Branch is responsible for a variety of programs; several are required by statute, while others are services rendered for Agency personnel and their dependents. These programs are:

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Statutory Programs

1. Federal Employees' Compensation Act
2. Overseas Medical Benefits for Employees and Dependents
3. Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance

Service Programs

1. Casualty Assistance
2. Exit Processing
3. Employee Emergencies
4. Personal Affairs Counseling
5. Assistance on Problems of Former Employees
6. Blood Donor Program
7. Savings Bond Campaign
8. PSAS Support
9. Welfare Assistance Board Support
10. Religious Services
11. Absentee Voter Assistance
12. Income Tax Assistance
13. Bulletin Boards
14. Car Pool Locator
15. Vital Papers Program

A study of the statistical data presented in this report will show a slight increase in the overall workload of the Branch for FY 66 over FY 65. This increase in workload was handled with one less experienced senior technician which is evidence of improved efficiency, but the Branch has lost some flexibility as a result.

CASUALTY ASSISTANCE

The established procedure for handling casualty cases again met the challenge of difficult and most sensitive cases. This year there were 46 deaths of Agency employees, the largest number of deaths during any year. In addition,

with several others, were extremely sensitive and complicated, requiring considerable time, effort, and travel to settle the

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affairs of the deceased.

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Four of the deaths occurring in FY 1966 were in "performance of duty," and all occurred overseas. The handling of the affairs in these cases included processing claims with the Bureau of Employees' Compensation.

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This year cancer and heart conditions were the leading causes of death with 14 each. Of the 46 deaths, 14 were from heart conditions, 14 were from cancer, 5 were the results of accidents, 2 were suicides, 1 homicide, and the other 10 were from miscellaneous causes. The average age at death was 46 years, slightly older than last year when it was 45.3 years.

EMPLOYEE DEATHS FY 1966  
(By Age Group)

<u>Ages</u>	<u>No. of Deaths</u>	<u>Ages</u>	<u>No. of Deaths</u>
21 - 25	2	46 - 50	6
26 - 30	2	51 - 55	7
31 - 35	2	56 - 60	6
36 - 40	6	61 - 65	2
41 - 45	12	Over 65	1
		Total	46

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The unusual and increased activity in these casualty cases required increased travel by Branch employees during the year in settling the claims.

There were eight deaths of dependents of Agency employees

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overseas which required action by the Branch in notifying the next of kin and assisting in the return and burial of the remains.

OVERSEAS MEDICAL CLAIMS

25X9 During this reporting period, there was a total of [REDACTED] claims processed under the Overseas Medical Programs. This was the largest number of claims processed under the program since it was started in 1953. There were [REDACTED] claims for dependents and [REDACTED] for employees, both showing slight increases over the previous year. 25X9

25X1A1a At the beginning of this fiscal year, a new method of recording expenditures was started to separate expenses incurred in FY 1965 from those in FY 1966. During this year, [REDACTED] was obligated from FY 1966 funds and in addition, [REDACTED] was spent for claims which had been incurred in FY 1965 making a total of [REDACTED] spent for overseas medical claims this year. If this is compared with last year's figure of [REDACTED] the cost of the program has increased over [REDACTED]. This large increase in the cost of the program can probably be accounted for by the increased cost of hospitalization. During this period, the rates in military hospitals alone increased from \$42 to \$44 per day. There is an indication that the rates in military hospitals will increase to \$49 per day during the coming year. 25X1A1a 25X1A1a

It would seem that the number of claims processed during the year has leveled off; however, with the indicated increase of cost in military hospitals, the cost of the program will probably increase during the coming years.

FEDERAL EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION ACT CLAIMS

There were 185 new claims processed to the Bureau of Employees' Compensation. This is an increase of 26 claims or 18% over the number processed last year. In addition, there is still considerable activity with BEC on the [REDACTED]

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During this year, there were four deaths approved by

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BEC in performance of duty as a result of accidents overseas. In addition, we processed a claim for a death that occurred overseas last year which BEC approved as performance of duty because of inadequate medical care.

The total number of claims filed under the Bureau of Employees' Compensation Act was 522. Of this number, 337 were CA-1's filed with no claim being processed and the other 185 claims were processed with BEC.

Several discussions have been held with the Safety Officer of the Agency in an effort to assure that he has as much information as possible concerning performance of duty accident cases. Arrangements were made to send the Safety Officer monthly machine runs as well as a machine run every six months on all our BEC type cases.

#### EXIT PROCESSING

The number of true separations of Staff Employees during FY 1966 was 2457, an increase of 455 separations or 22% over the number leaving in the preceding year. The table below shows a comparison of the number of employees separating during FY 1966 and 1965:

	<u>FY 1966</u>	<u>FY 1965</u>
Resignations & LWOP	1,857	1,833
Retirements	185	138
Deaths	42	31
Summer Employees	<u>373</u>	<u>---</u>
Total	2,457	2,002

During the year, the exit processing program was further streamlined by returning the responsibility of retrieving Agency badges from departing personnel to the Office of Security. The GS-12 and above separation worksheet was revised and a revision of the separation code was developed and sent to interested offices for comments.

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Also a modified version of the Exit Processing Center was established in BCB (Room 1J-37) because of the lack of other space and this operated successfully during the year, materially reducing the number of manhours which would have been required for departing personnel to get to the widely separated clearing offices on their last work day. Another direct benefit of the Exit Processing Center, even in its modified version, resulted in accelerating the final clearance certifications and retirement refund applications so that they now reach the Office of Finance on the same day that the employee clears out of the Agency.

#### COUNSELING

The counseling activity continues, but at a sharply increased rate this year. During this year, there were 130 counseling cases involving 261 sessions. The table shows the types of counseling cases and the number of sessions held with the personnel involved:

<u>Type</u>	<u>Sessions</u>
Personal Problems	27
Financial Problems	131
Job Related Problems	6
PSAS Cases	17
Sensitive Personal Cases	80
Total	261

In addition, there were 116 debt complaints against 65 Agency employees. Of these, 28 had complaints against them in previous years. Eight of these employees having debt problems resigned or were terminated during the year; also, one of the long-standing debt cases died in June 1966.

#### WELFARE ASSISTANCE BOARD

The Welfare Assistance Board (WAB) approved 17 loans totaling \$2,340.00 for Fiscal Year 1966, as compared to 22 loans for \$2,285.00 for the preceding year.

The WAB continues to render assistance to those needing relatively small amounts of cash. The Employee Activity

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Association which normally consumed most of the income no longer receives a grant, consequently WAB assets have grown approximately \$1,600 during Fiscal Year 1966 to a total of \$6,975.78.

#### SAVINGS BOND PROGRAM

The 1966 Savings Bond Campaign, conducted within the Agency during the period 6 May to 30 June 1966, was given added impetus by the personal concern and interest of President Johnson.

As in the past, the vice-chairman/keyman machinery of the Agency's Consolidated Charities Committee was utilized in carrying out the Savings Bond Campaign, which was monitored through a Savings Bond Committee composed of senior Agency officials from each of the major components. Keymen were selected throughout the Organization at a level that would assure proper presentation of the purpose of the Campaign. Keymen were instructed to contact every employee in their area of responsibility personally, explain the Campaign and answer any questions concerning the purchase of Savings Bonds through payroll deductions.

The Campaign resulted in 1,863 new payroll savers who signed allotment cards and 279 employees who increased their allotments. The total value of the new and increased allotments for each two-week pay period at the end of the Campaign was \$25,811.42, or an increase in payroll savings of \$671,096.92 for a year. At the start of the 1966 Campaign, approximately 28% of Agency employees were enrolled in the payroll savings plan; at the end of the Campaign, the percentage of participation had risen to 48.3%.

Total figures for the year-long program are shown below:

<u>Bond Sales</u>	<u>FY 1966</u>
Number of Bonds Issued	46,135
Maturity Value	\$2,476,150
 <u>* Payroll Savers at Year End</u>	 <u>FY 1966</u>
Vouchered	4,555
Confidential Funds	371
	<u>4,926</u>

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\* The Campaign ended 30 June 1966 and this figure does not include a number of allotments that were to be effective in July and August 1966.

#### BLOOD DONOR PROGRAM

The Fairfax County Red Cross Bloodmobile continues to come to Headquarters the first Tuesday of each month as a vital part of the Agency's Blood Donor Program.

During Fiscal Year 1966, the number of pints of blood donated by Agency personnel again decreased. This was caused in part by the continued increase in the number of personnel assigned in buildings away from Headquarters and not convenient to the bloodmobile, especially the Rosslyn area.

#### Number of Pints Collected

FY 1966	1,740
FY 1965	1,925
FY 1964	2,419
FY 1963	1,956

We now have 586 employees who have donated a gallon or more of blood.

25X1A6a The Office of Security has given approval and plans are now being made to have the D. C. Red Cross Chapter go into the [REDACTED] once a month for NPIC employees and for the Arlington Chapter to go to the Ames Building for our employees in the Rosslyn area. It is hoped that with this additional service and convenience the blood donations will show a definite increase for FY 1967.

#### FEDERAL EMPLOYEES' GROUP LIFE INSURANCE

As shown in another part of this report, there were 46 deaths of Agency employees during FY 1966, 39 of which were covered by FEGLI with \$510,000 of insurance being paid on these claims. This was an increase of \$137,000 or 37% over the \$373,000 paid last year. There were 169 waivers of FEGLI processed and 37 persons requested that their insurance be reinstated.

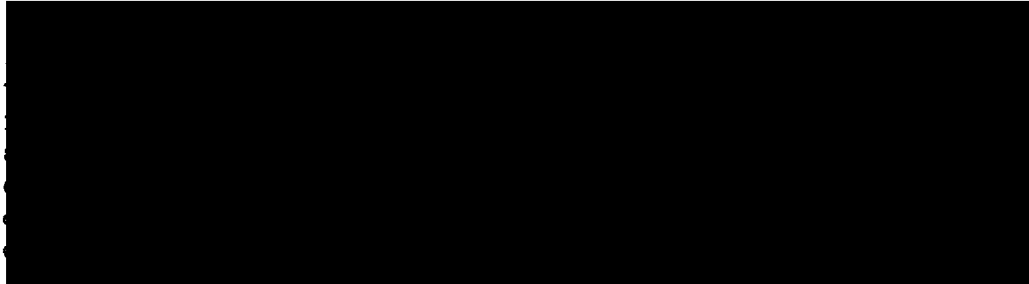
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MISCELLANEOUS  
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2. The Branch again arranged for religious services in the auditorium at Christmas and during the Lenten season. Services were conducted each Wednesday during Lent with 1194 persons attending Protestant services and 2350 attending Catholic services. A Passover service was also held with 63 persons attending.
3. The decentralized income tax assistance program was again sponsored by the Branch and fifty individuals were designated by operating offices to attend a two day Federal, Virginia, Maryland and District of Columbia income tax training session held in the auditorium. The session on Federal income tax was conducted by two Internal Revenue Service agents and an Agency staff employee provided information on the state income tax returns. The Branch served as a control supply point for the distribution of the required forms, and approximately 40,000 Form 1040's were dispensed as well as uncounted other forms.
4. During the year, the Branch Chief and Deputy Branch Chief briefed several personnel who were leaving for overseas support assignments, and also briefed several groups of Headquarters personnel on the many programs of the Branch.
5. The Branch still serves as liaison for Agency components requesting Notary Public appointments and serves as an information center for Notary Public questions. During FY 1966, the Branch continued to provide notarial services to the senior officials of the Agency and approximately 600 notarial transactions were handled for Agency personnel.
6. As mentioned earlier in the report, during this year the Branch lost a GS-12 Employee Benefits Officer position and

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the person occupying this position was transferred out of the Branch. The loss of this experienced senior personnel officer has seriously reduced the flexibility of the Branch in handling several important programs such as casualty assistance, employee emergencies, and counseling. All of these programs showed a marked increase in activity during the year, and the Branch was taxed to the point that the Chief and Deputy Chief had to spend a disproportionate amount of their time on these programs. If these activities continue at the present level or increase, serious consideration must be given to the addition of an experienced senior personnel officer to the Branch and that future reassignments from the Branch must be replaced by experienced personnel.

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BENEFITS AND COUNSELING BRANCH

STATISTICAL DATA

1 July 1965 - 30 June 1966

<u>Casualties Reported</u>	<u>FY 1966</u>	<u>FY 1965</u>	<u>FY 1964</u>
1. Serious Illnesses.....	159	136	182
2. Deaths			
Employees.....	46	35	42
Dependents (Overseas).....	8	11	6
<u>Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance</u>			
1. Death Claims.....	39	30	32
2. Requests for Insurance.....	37	31	45
3. Waivers after EOD.....	169	159	149
<u>Unpaid Compensation</u>			
Total Claims.....	37	27	37
<u>Pre-exit Interviews, Exit Processing,</u> <u>Counseling, and Associated</u> <u>Activities</u>			
1. Resignations - Separations			
Summer Employees.....	373	0	353
Retirements.....	185	138	128
Deaths.....	42	31	39
Other.....	1485	1833	1512
Total.....	2085	2002	2032
2. Advanced Sick Leave.....	239	234	292
3. Leave Without Pay including maternity.....	372	374	472
4. Counseling.....	261	124	233
5. Indebtedness Complaints.....	116	197	150

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MEDICAL AND COMPENSATION CLAIMS

STATISTICAL DATA

1 July 1965 - 30 June 1966

Overseas Hospitalization Programs

FY 1966

FY 1965

FY 1964

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Total Cases

1. Employee.....
2. Dependent.....

Action Taken

1. Employee  
Approved.....
- Rejected.....
- Withdrawn.....
- Pending.....
2. Dependent  
Approved.....
- Rejected.....
- Withdrawn.....
- Pending.....
- Inactive.....

Bureau of Employees' Compensation Claims

Total Cases

Action Taken

1. New Claims Processed.....	185	144	174
Approved.....	75	30	69
Rejected.....	6	4	6
Withdrawn.....	10	2	9
Pending.....	79	108	86
Inactive.....	15	0	0
2. New Claims - CA-1 Only.....	337	352	400

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CLAIMS BY FISCAL YEAR

	<u>Total Claims</u>	<u>BEC</u>
FY 1966	756	185
FY 1965	683	144
FY 1964	622	174
FY 1963	474	149
FY 1962	442	94
FY 1961	474	136
FY 1960	430	111
FY 1959	436	93
FY 1958	425	83
FY 1957	308	107
FY 1956	129	87
FY 1955	102	75
FY 1954	101	51
FY 1953	74	40

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\* The Dependent Overseas Program was initiated in 1957.

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## SECTION II

### PLANS AND OBJECTIVES FOR FISCAL YEAR 1967

1. A review of Section I of this report, Major Accomplishments and Significant Developments, and previous reports will show a steady increase in the amount of work performed by the Branch and a steady decline in the number of professional employees available to perform the required services. One of the prime objectives for the coming year will be to have the flexibility, professional as well as clerical, and adaptability to meet the need of the moment. This will require that replacements for present personnel have the necessary experience and seniority to be able to absorb the technical knowledge required quickly. Because of expected personnel changes, consideration should be given as soon as possible to obtaining replacements that meet the above standards.

2. Current plans indicate the possibility that the Branch will move into larger space during FY 1967. The proposed space has 150 square feet more space than the present space, but two additional personnel will be occupying the space. This will enable the Branch to make better utilization of personnel, but it will make more difficult the problem of counseling interviews in sensitive cases and exit processing.

3. There have been discussions about the possibility of transferring the Social Security liaison function from Contract Personnel to the Benefits and Counseling Branch, but no definite action has been taken to accomplish this at this time. If this function is transferred to the Branch and the counseling interviews continue to increase along with the increase in the other routine functions, consideration should be given to reclaiming the position that was abolished in July 1965.

4. We have started negotiations with the D. C. Chapter of the Red Cross and the Arlington Chapter to see if they can set up regular schedules for the Bloodmobile to take care of the personnel at NPIC and in the Rosslyn area. The Office of Security has given their approval to this expansion of the Red Cross Blood Donor Program. With this expected expansion of the

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program, it is expected that we can increase the number of pints of blood contributed by Agency personnel.

5. In an effort to increase participation in the payroll savings plan for purchase of U. S. Savings Bonds, we are going to include a flyer with the first paycheck that includes the recently approved pay raise. We also plan to reinstate the procedure of sending a bond allotment card with each Form 1150 notifying a person of his promotion.

6. It is hoped that a representative of BCB together with a representative of the Insurance Branch will make a trip to acquaint the support personnel in foreign stations of the programs of the Benefits and Counseling Branch. In this connection, it is also proposed that an effort be made to advise support personnel in the area divisions of the BCB activities in order that personnel departing for overseas assignments will be aware of the various programs and benefits available to them as Agency employees.

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SECTION III

PLANS FOR FISCAL YEAR 1968

There are no major program changes anticipated for  
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